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TRAUMA, EMOTIONS, AND SILENCE: ORAL HISTORY NARRATIVES ABOUT THE COMPLICATED PAST ON THE FRONTIERS (EASTERN HALYCHYNA, 1930^{S}–1940^{S})

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Oral history always pertains to emotions. Moreover, the narration of a life story itself is always an emotional experience. Biographical narratives are individual thoughts about past experiences with a special focus on senses and feelings. Not infrequently, it is possible to recover signals of a traumatic experience and the painfulness of the story in the life events described. Candid stories contain a variety of evident emotions: laughter and cry, mimics, gestures, changes in posture, non-verbal communication (tone, pitch, and the range of voice), as well as silence (Bornat 2010).

Nevertheless, scholars are becoming increasingly interested in the study of the emotional component of oral records. Emotion, unlike irresistible impulse, for instance, can be analyzed (Harding 2014, 101). The question remains, however, of the (non)overlay of current emotions when remembering with the emotions previously experienced. Thus, what is the correlation between the emotions articulated in the present and the emotions experienced at the time of the event? Can we remember our past feelings in the present moment? Researchers tend to regard ideas about emotions from the past as interesting, even fascinating, configurations to be understood as part of their own time (Reddy 2001, x): "[…] recall levels in memories about emotions are very low. We may remember the fact of experiencing grief or excitement but not the very feeling of grief or excitement" (Holmes 2017, 3–4); we should remember about "transformation of emotions in time," catching on "symbolic transformation of suffering into a significant individual experience" (Rolph and Dorothy 2010, 56–57).

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In case of a traumatic experience, the emotion can be revoked[1] while the memory of the details is suppressed.

Emotions are present and connected with everything – the context, the process of the interview, and the questions, (non)built relations between the interviewer and the narrator (Harding 2014, 98). Katie Holmes argues that to understand the expression of emotion in oral history interviews, and we need to view such elements as the process of remembering in a life history interview, time parameters – the time of the event and the time of the telling, the context of the interview and the interaction between interviewer and interviewee (Holmes 2017a). The last issue – building a trust-based relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee is most widely described in methodological literature (for more, see Hamilton 2008; Blee 2006). Empathy is crucial when recording a quality interview. With careful preparation and susceptible interpretation, respondents can formulate their "own experience in their own voice" and, in such a way, expand the limits of study to a degree. What the researcher has to do, without claim for "genuine feelings," is to listen "beyond what is being said and be attentive to everything happening" (Holmes 2017b). The interviewer has quite a strong influence on the respondents and the testimony they are giving. That is why researchers are more and more focused on their emotional state and the understanding that one of the channels we need to fine-tune is our own. "Our role is not to play therapist, but to learn as much as our interviewees are willing to share about their past life in all its complexities," Katie Holmes aptly summarizes (Holmes 2017b). Thus, the key issue in the assessment of oral history lies not in the scope of material introduced to the story but in how well the interviewer has coped with the circumstances that were affecting them or the material they had to work with.

Many of the overt emotions give us visual prompts. However, not all projects can be implemented via video recordings, so the audio format still prevails. Transcribing remains the optimal mode of work. Transcripts have their advantages – they are easier and quicker to work with it. At the same time, despite the developed systems of special symbols, non-verbal signals of trauma (change of voice, long pauses, body language, getting lost in the past) are hard to detect in transcripts. As a result, fieldwork is always full of emotions, yet emotions are nowhere to be seen in protocols and scripts. Perhaps because of the difficulties and the ethical hazards, as David Jones assumes,

[1] Oral history studies on the traumatic memories experienced to prove that, for instance, even forty years after, people are still navigating the complex emotional landscape of the Vietnam war (Campbell 2018, 17).

many researchers are tempted not to dwell on emotional material during interviews or even in their notes and transcripts (Jones 1998, 55). Nonetheless, verbal behavior (what is said or written) also offers a lot of material for understanding cognitive processes related to emotional expression and the creation of senses. The style of written and oral speech used in narrations reflects how people display their emotional experiences by cognitively processing and structuring them. The use of pronouns is a sign of cognitive information processing: first-person pronouns are more extensively used by people who are experiencing physical or emotional pain since they draw attention to themselves (Truong *et al*., 2013; Hamilton 2010).

The experience of working with interviews in the suggested article is not typical, yet not unique – it is based on processing previously recorded interviews and lies in the realm of "secondary analysis" of oral sources by other researchers (who in practice often represent adjacent disciplines and look from a different perspective[2]). When working with transcripts, attention is drawn to words – what is being said or left out, on the plotline and plot twists. On the other hand, searching for overt emotions in stories of traumatic experiences is a waste of time. Even the most dramatic and emotionally intense memories are often told without any emotion articulated due to the trauma associated with them (BenEzer 1999, 40). Non-verbalized and barely noticeable emotions are hidden inside the story. While doing "secondary analysis," I was set on tracing the memories of tragic experiences, e.g., childhood traumatic memories and (non)expressed emotions, either said or omitted, in the interview. How do the elderly remember their experiences – how do they tell of what they have seen/heard, how do they explain it; how do they describe the traumatic experience; what type of emotional conversation do they consciously bring into the public sphere and try to make understandable for everyone and which conversations do they hide inside; what are they looking for and what are the senses in what has (not) happened? Feelings, like memory, are not best measured in terms of accuracy or sincerity, yet they open a way for oral historians to explore the historically changing meanings of different emotions and their relationships to political movements and other social and cultural phenomena (Hamilton 2010, 92).

[2] The issue of "secondary analysis" of qualitative data is not new and remains relevant. A broad methodological discussion has started in Western historiography (the starting point is "Secondary Analysis in Qualitative Research – Utopia and Perspectives" conference held in November 2005 in France). In addition to apparent advantages, the discussion focuses primarily on dissimilarity of research issues and lack of contextual knowledge – the issues of "approach" and "context" as well as ethical aspects (For more, see Hammersley 2010; Moore 2007; Silva 2007).

Narrations

The empirical basis of the research are interviews recorded as part of the project "Social Anthropology of Filling the Void: Poland and Ukraine after World War II"[3] and processed by the author for their publication by the Center for Urban History of East-Central Europe in Lviv[4]. The project introduces the concept of "social emptiness," "a phenomenon that arose in Central and Eastern Europe during and immediately after the war as a result of ethnic cleansing on a massive scale, political revolutions, displacement, and population transfers." Interviews conducted within the framework of the project reveal the process and mechanisms of (not)replacing the missing elements in ethnic communities (Jews and Poles) and separate social and professional groups against the backdrop of the 1930ˢ–1940ˢ epoch in general and everyday history, microhistory in particular.

The interviews were recorded by an interdisciplinary group of Polish-Ukrainian female researchers in 2017–2019 with residents of villages and towns of Ternopil, Lviv, and Ivano-Frankivsk oblasts born in the 1920ˢ–1930ˢ. The stories are biographical and pertain to the whole life of interviewees, with a special focus made on the 1930ˢ–1940ˢ and World War II. Women prevail among the interviewees. The oldest participants were born in 1923, and the youngest was born in the late 1930ˢ. Their stories are biographies of average native Halychyna residents (only three of the men interviewed can be loosely categorized as "public witnesses": two of them were interested in local history, and one already gave a similar type interview), who shared their life experience for the first time and, consequently, shared what in their opinion was important to remember, as no recorded memory will be left when they pass away.

Based on her own experience of interviewing, Dorothy Atkinson summarizes three ways in which people display emotions when telling their stories: bearing witness, talking about separation and loss, drawing a veil (Rolph and Atkinson 2010, 59). Based on Dorothy Atkinson's concept on the three levels of expressing emotions in oral historical narratives, the paper focuses on the plot of narration (narrations), stories on separation, suffering, and loss, as well as silence – what has not been told and has been kept to oneself. What did the eyewitnesses of the 1930ˢ–1940ˢ (not) say?

[3] For more details, see project page: https://uma.lvivcenter.org/uk/collections/142/interviews.

[4] Interview with a woman, DOB 1931, recorded in the village of Hlibiv, Husiatyn district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Anna Wylegała.

Memories of children

The majority of interviewees were people born in the early 1930s. In their stories, the emphasis was placed on pre-war and war years – memories of childhood and youth. Childhood memories were related to getting a school education, where local Polish people would often study alongside Ukrainians and Jews. Those affected by labor migration shared their memories of fathers working abroad (in the USA, in Argentina) and losing everything they earned to post-war collectivization. Children's memories are full of stories about local landowners and their families, the allure of landlord's manor (well-kept garden, the finery of interior) and the household, hired labor, attitude towards village people, the fate of the landlord and their manor after 1939. Urbanites drew imaginary maps of the town with buildings significant for the local community.

Only in passing did they mention the pre-war ethnic and religious life of the local community. Childhood memories of town people did not encompass all the aspects of the town's pre-war history, unlike the stories about more compact village communities. Predominantly positive memories of Polish and Jewish neighbors – attending the Catholic cathedral for Catholic Christmas or the synagogue out of curiosity, singing Polish carols, children helping the Jews on Saturday. In many cases of Ukrainian-Polish families, double celebrations of religious holidays, becoming relatives, and speaking both languages were described. Inter-ethnic antagonisms in such families were clearly felt (articulated) only in several microstories. For instance, one woman (born in 1931) came from a mixed Ukrainian-Polish family, where her father, a Ukrainian, contrary to the adopted tradition, insisted on church christening. Recorded in the girl's memory were everyday inter-ethnic conflicts of fellow villagers and their particular aggravation during the war[5].

A distinct plotline in the narrations is pre-war stories about Jewish home folk, their occupations, homes, some personal information, traditions, the attitude of fellow villagers towards them, the stereotypes, hiding during the war, and (no) help from the locals. Described in more detail were stories of separate Jewish families of traders who kept their stores in the village or Jewish neighbors and their children who were friends of narrators. The Jews were "others" and simultaneously "self." They lived inside the community but led their own way of life – with a different religion and tradition, less frequently different appearance and language – and Christians kept close contact with them in the economic sphere.

[5] Interview with a woman, DOB 1927, recorded in the village of Kuriany, Berezhany district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Marta Havryshko.

The joint everyday life of Ukrainians with the Jewish community of the village can be vividly illustrated by the following conversation[6],

> I.: And how did the Jews get along with the locals? With Ukrainians.
> R.: Well. They got along well.
> I.: And there was no animosity?
> R.: No.
> I.: Then, maybe, people laughed at them?
> R.: No, we had no issues. Neither them with us nor us with them. On Saturday, they… […] He needed someone to stoke the fire in the kitchen stove as he could not himself do it.
> I.: So, your father went and stoked the fire?
> R.: Father? Far from it! My father stoking the fire?
> I.: No, he didn't go?
> R.: My father, a Pan (Sir), going to the Jew to stoke the fire? I did.
> I.: You did?
> R.: Yes (*laughs*). I went, and he gave me either some pastry or sweets or whatever. He lived not far from our house. So, I quickly ran there and stoked the fire.

Not long before the arrival of the German troops, the Jews were deported, and their property was plundered by fellow village folk. Like all the children who were curious about the events happening, the narrators happened to be eyewitnesses to execution by firing squad, of which they did not tell much. Occasional stories were told about saved Jews, often teenagers and youngsters. Town folk were direct witnesses to the creation of ghettos, the Jews staying in them, hunger and the attempts to get food, and hiding and shootings.

The village and town people remember pre-war Jews with laughter. Not infrequently, these parts in transcripts directly point to emotion "[…] I forgot who of the Jews lived there. I don't remember anymore. Oh, Shymon. […] There were Jewish huts. Shymon (*laughing*). […] We went [to the Jewish church]. We were savvy girls. We were city girls. We wanted to see how the Jews prayed (*laughing*)."[7] The kids did all sorts of harm to the Jews: "[…] there was this Jew who would buy up eggs. So, when he was walking down the street with a basket, we would sometimes throw stones. […] (*Laughing*) And he would turn around

[6] Interview with a woman, DOB 1930, recorded in the village of Koropets, Monastyryska district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Anna Wylegała.

[7] Interview with a woman, DOB 1926, recorded in the village of Osivtsi, Buchach district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Wiktoria Kudela-Świątek.

with such a face – kids. […]"[8]; "[…] I did not do anything, but the boys would constantly pick a quarrel. On Saturday, they had the Feast of Tabernacles, and they had a large house, and they would open a so-called, you know. So, I incited the boys, and they threw stones (*laughter*). They had some gatherings there, and everybody came on Saturday, all the Geinas and Moishes, all the Jews prayed there."[9] Peers would make fun of the Jewish kids, for instance, treat them to pork. "The boys were already older […], "Listen, give Volko some raw pig fat." "They are not allowed to eat pig fat. How do I give it to him?" "Cut yourself a slice of bread, some pig fat; Volko likes it." So, I went, the pig fat, smoked ham with fat were hanging there, I cut some for myself and him, cut some bread – and we sat down and ate. […] It happened, I don't know, five-ten times maybe. […] Lipka [Volko's mum] said to my mum, "Listen, tell your son not to give fat to mine. Tell him not to do it." (*laughter*)"[10]

The initially proclaimed "fine" cohabitation of Ukrainians and Poles was offset in further conversations and vice versa. Scarce individual memories of those born in the first half of the 1930[s], apparently, complemented by those told by older members of the family or local community members,

> I.: Bachta was a Pole?
>
> R.: Yes, a Pole. He was a very bad person. […] But Dubil was even worse. […] he said, "Co, Olha, looking where Ukraine will come from? Ukraine will come to be when a hair grows here on my body." He made fun of embroidered shirts. He said "umbroidered" shirt. He was nasty like that.
>
> I.: And what happened to him? Did he leave for Poland?
>
> R.: They left. The mother was really nice; the grandmother was a good woman. They tried to bring him to his senses, but it did not help. He was such an avid Pole. And he hated us. All in all… We got along well. We visited each other for the holidays. Polish Christmas Eve – they invite us, and we go to their place for supper, Christmas, Christmas Eve. Then we invited them […][11].

> I.: I know you were a little child, but maybe you remember how life was under Polish rule? What can you tell about that period? Perhaps, your parents told you something?

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[8] Interview with a woman, DOB 1927, recorded in the village of Ushnia, Zolochiv district of Lviv oblast. Interviewer Marta Havryshko.

[9] Interview with a man, DOB 1933, recorded in the town of Zolochiv, Lviv oblast. Interviewer Nataliya Otrishchenko.

[10] Interview with a woman, DOB 1930, recorded in the village of Lany, Peremyshliany district of Lviv oblast. Interviewer Anna Wylegała.

[11] Interview with a woman, DOB 1933, recorded in the town of Tovste, Zalishchyky district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Anna Chebotariova.

R.: I know. I know. Well, you see – Poles, Jews, and Ukrainians got along well. We had mixed marriages. My father's sister got married to a Polish man. There was no difference. […]
R.: But Ukrainians did not have such rights. Poles could take the cobblestoned streets, i.e., the common road, while Ukrainians were not allowed to use them. Do you see? Such things did not exist there. My father's brother Yosyph wore an embroidered shirt for some holiday. And the Poles, they stabbed him with a knife over here, but not very deep. So, they had their own culture. Poles called them "kabani".
I.: "Kabani"? What does "kabani" mean?
R.: Well, pigs is what it means.
I.: Oh, kabani (hogs). They called Ukrainians kabani. And Ukrainians, did they call Poles any names? Did they use any nicknames? Do you know anything about it?
R.: I don't know. Mazur![12]

Disconnected were the memories of the Ukrainian-Polish confrontation during the war, the activities of the Ukrainian nationalists underground in the village, the way locals helped them, the murders of female teachers who came from the Eastern regions, repressions of the Soviet government. Only some stories contained vivid childhood memories of the Ukrainian-Polish conflict, successive hiding of Ukrainian and Polish families, descriptions of specific local cases of a massacre. Even a small number of Poles in the village did not prevent inter-ethnic hostility. Interviews contain moments that personify participants of the conflict and the deceased on both sides as well as those who collaborated with the German and the Soviet governments. Thus, one of the women interviewed witnessed how Ukrainian nationalist underground members massacred Poles in Barysh, Ternopil oblast in February 1945, of which she provided a detailed account using the example of a deceased family, which had Ukrainians among its members[13]. A recurrent motive in another conversation was the story of a brother, a member of the Ukrainian nationalist underground, who emigrated to the West in 1944, and the assistance to underground and the arrest of the narrator in 1953. The man referred to frequent stories of underground members repressed by the Soviet government in the post-war years, detailing their names and conviction time, and, on the contrary, described the massacres

[12] Interview with a woman, DOB 1931, recorded in the village of Barysh, Buchach district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Marta Havryshko.

[13] Interview with a man, DOB 1932, recorded in the village of Koropets, current Monastyryska district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Marta Havryshko.

of the Ukrainian underground. It had to do with the exacerbation of the Ukrainian-Polish armed conflict during the war, the arson of the neighboring Polish village of Pluzhnyky, Ternopil oblast, organized by the Ukrainian nationalist underground[14].

In several interviews, the narrators told of the establishment of Soviet rule in 1939, the repressed Polish settlers, everyday life under the German occupation, the local government, accommodation and everyday life of the German soldiers, some landlords, and their fate. A traumatic experience of one of the female interviewees was witnessing the arrest and cart-away of her grandfather to Siberia in June of 1941 and the hiding of her family[15]. Using the stories of her relatives, one of the female respondents told about the withdrawal of the Soviet government in June of 1941 and the people tortured in prisons[16]. During a conversation with another respondent, we heard a detailed account of the retreat of the Soviets and the German troops entering the village in the summer of 1941[17].

The memories of pre-war life were more extended – repeat arrival of the Soviet rule, collectivization, education, and teachers, female teachers arriving from the Eastern regions, everyday life, religious life in the underground, post-war arrests, and repressions. Women told more about everyday life – financial conditions, family life, children, work, earnings, the practice of writing a "correct biography," trade, social sphere, and medicine. They told of the deportation of Poles to Poland and the arrival of displaced Ukrainians, the way they set up their life, life in hunger, the relations with locals. A woman, who got married to a Ukrainian man displaced from Poland, shared the memories of the pre-war life of displaced families[18]. Intermittent were the memories of teachers arriving from Eastern Ukraine and the attitude of locals and the Ukrainian underground towards them.

Stories of teenagers

Significantly more complete was the testimony of eyewitnesses born in the 1920ˢ (especially several from the beginning of the decade). They had clear memories of multinational communities of Halychyna villages and towns (for

[14] Interview with a woman, DOB 1930, recorded in the town of Tovste, Zalishchyky district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Nataliya Otrishchenko.

[15] Interview with a woman, DOB 1934, recorded in the town of Bibrka, Peremyshliany district of Lviv oblast. Interviewer Anna Wylegała.

[16] Interview with a man, DOB 1932, recorded in the village of Koropets, current Monastyryska district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Marta Havryshko.

[17] Interview with a woman, DOB 1927, recorded in the village of Ushnia, Zolochiv district of Lviv oblast. Interviewer Marta Havryshko.

[18] Ibid.

instance, Rohatyn and Bibrka), joint (non)coexistence and occupations, religious practices of fellow village folk – Ukrainians, Poles, and Jews, everyday rural life (namely, solely peaceful coexistence of Ukrainians and Poles in a predominantly Polish village before the war as recorded in the memory of a woman born into a mixed family of a Ukrainian man and a Polish woman [19] or the coexistence of her family with Polish neighbors against the backdrop of Ukrainian-Polish confrontation in the village[20]). They remembered numerous Jewish classmates, Jewish families living on their street and in the locality in general: their names and last names, place of residence, Jewish housing, occupations, and professional reputations, the fate of buildings after the war, the synagogue, the perished Jewish quarter. Those born in the 1920[s] saw the dynamics of change in the multinational coexistence of the local community during pre-war years and an apparent exacerbation in the relations between Ukrainians and Poles on the eve of the war. Their stories of the Ukrainian-Polish relations echo those told by the younger generation born in the 1930[s],

> R.: […] later, it started to matter when it started. But before that, no, we got along so well, we visited each other. Well, it was already felt a bit. It was before the Polish war when it became like that when the Germans were to arrive. You know, it was already like that, but…[21]

> R.: […] There was no huge difference, but before the war itself, the difference between Ukrainians and Poles was palpable. Well, but…
> I.: And why was that?
> R.: Hm… (*pause*) Poles were Poles because it was their state. And Ukrainians were deprived because we were conquered by the Poles. We were not conquered, after World War I, the world was redivided, and we were given to the Poles. So, they did not conquer us. Ukrainians fought. […] Poles tortured us a lot. Poles did not like Ukrainians. Poles held jobs …, how… to study… we had two hours of Ukrainian language per week. But it was a Polish school. I learned the Polish language for five years. Everything was Polish[22].

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[19] Interview with a woman, DOB 1927, recorded in the village of Osivtsi, Buchach district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Anna Wylegała.

[20] Interview with a woman, DOB 1926, recorded in the village of Osivtsi, Buchach district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Wiktoria Kudela-Świątek.

[21] Interview with a woman, DOB 1927, recorded in the village of Koropets, Monastyryska district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Anna Wylegała.

[22] Interview with a woman, DOB 1927, recorded in the village of Ushnia, Zolochiv district of Lviv oblast. Interviewer Marta Havryshko.

Given their age, the narrators were eyewitnesses to the establishment of Soviet rule in the region in 1939, the repressions of Polish settlers, officials, and local landlords, execution by shooting of prisoners in the towns of Zolochiv and Bibrka during the retreat of the Soviets in June 1941,[23], the pogrom of Jews in the center of Bibrka in the summer of 1941[24]. One of the respondents met the German troops in Rohatyn in June 1941 as a member of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) and remembered the atmosphere of great expectations among the Ukrainians. A separate plotline in the stories is the ghettos in Bibrka, Rohatyn and Buchach, the life of Jews there, their execution by shooting and attempts to escape on the way to execution, the cases of hiding, the hiding places being given away, occasional Jews being saved, the fate of their households and property. One of the women witnessed a mass shooting of a group of Jews who were hiding in the forest: they were convoyed past her home at the time, which used to belong to a Jew that she was hiding for some time[25]. People remembered the local German administration, the labor conditions under occupation, hiding and taking youngsters away to work in Germany, the creation of SS Division Galicia[26]. More detailed accounts were provided about the deportation of Poles to Poland in the post-war years – the motivation, the circumstances of deportation, the fate of property they left behind.

The stories of respondents born in the 1920[s] tell about young people who could (not) make a choice. One of the narrators (born in 1922), who consciously rejected the profession he obtained and a chance to emigrate in favor of the life of the head of a self-defense unit of the Ukrainian nationalist underground, told a detailed story of the fight of underground members in the second half of the 1940[s], the methods that the Soviet government used against them, his constant arrests and imprisonments[27]. Another respondent, on the contrary, shared memories of his service in the Soviet army and was visibly unwilling to dive into the Polish-Ukrainian conflict in the village. He was mobilized in 1944, of which he told in great detail, and came back to the village in 1948[28]. The interview with

[23] Interview with a man, DOB 1927, recorded in the town of Bibrka, Peremyshliany district of Lviv oblast. Interviewer Marta Havryshko.

[24] Interview with a woman, DOB 1923, recorded in the village of Barysh, Buchach district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Marta Havryshko.

[25] Interview with a man, DOB 1923, recorded in the town of Bibrka, Peremyshliany district of Lviv oblast. Interviewer Marta Havryshko.

[26] Interview with a man, DOB 1922, recorded in the town of Rohatyn, Ivano-Frankivsk oblast. Interviewer Anna Wylegała.

[27] Interview with a man, DOB 1925, recorded in the village of Osivtsi, Buchach district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Marta Havryshko.

[28] Interview with a man, DOB 1925, recorded in the town of Rohatyn, Ivano-Frankivsk

the respondent convicted by the Soviet regime in 1947 (served his sentence until 1954) used specific examples to provide clear illustrations of the aggravation in inter-personal relations during the post-war years, the moments of choice, unfair deaths, and gratuitous violence, the offenses hurled by the Soviet official/military man and the Ukrainian underground member[29].

Speaking of violence, suffering, and death

The people who survived the war years and post-war repressions of the Soviet government told very personal and very touching stories of challenge and loss in their life. The narrations were ridden with pain, and listening to them was a painful experience. Average witnesses openly and sincerely shared the things they have experienced quite often for the first time. "I want to tell you everything," stressed the woman born in 1938, whose fate was full of hardships and hiding as a child in the Ukrainian underground, "but I will not tell you everything. This isn't the first time I wanted to tell everything. They say there isn't enough time for it. They are right – not enough time, but I would tell everything.[30]". In such fashion, a story emerged, which is recorded and aimed at a large audience, so that more people can find out about this experience. Being able to look back at life, to tell the world "how it was" is part of the healing process, giving a purpose not only to the telling of the story but to the experiences which generated it; it is a way of making sense of those events and of life itself (Rolph and Dorothy 2010, 61–62). If a person is just willing to talk about what comes to their mind, the analyst will be able to discern unconscious processes operating in the topics chosen and the language used (Jones 1998, 49). During recording, you have to believe everything that is being said and perceive it as "genuine" since it is someone's story. "[…] what makes oral sources different," emphasized Italian researcher of the American literature and culture, oral historian, music scientist Alessandro Portelli, "is that they tell us less about the events of the past than about their meaning (Portelli 1998, 67)." Central to the oral story is the subjective experience of an individual, their individual presentations of their past. An individual adapts their experience during the recording and in front of a potential audience; interview transcripts may be analyzed for the way they outline

oblast. Interviewer Marta Havryshko.

[29] Interview with a woman, DOB 1938, recorded in the village of Hlibiv, Husiatyn district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Marta Havryshko.

[30] Interview with a woman, DOB 1927, recorded in the village of Vyshnivchyk, Terebovlia district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Anna Wylegała.

a specific historical moment and interpret generally accepted discourses (Harding 2010, 35).

Children's experiences, often those of loss and separation, were the most emotionally charged within the framework of this research project. Dorothy Atkinson, when interviewing a group of people with a learning disability, as the organizer of the research group, was trying to avoid or at least postpone what, in her opinion, was painful – the stay at a treatment institution. It was unwise, as she later admitted, to start the conversation from childhood and school years, "My focus on childhood, and other early memories, inevitably lead to the disclosure of painful memories … Ironically, by way of contrast, people's later memories of their adult life in an institution, because they were shared, were often told with humor and in a spirit of defiance (Rolph and Dorothy 2010, 59)."

Something that on multiple occasions would be articulated in biographical narratives as "self-realization" of trauma (BenEzer 1999, 34) – being an orphan and back-breaking child labor. Childhood meant work in the field and around the house unbearable for children. The female narrators had to work as the oldest of the children in the family, who had to shoulder the burden of responsibilities. The word "the oldest" would often re-emerge in memories. Twelve-year-old girls would do the hard work around the house and have an additional job for the local landowner. "Well, of course. Where did I work?" the orphan who has lost both parents remembers, "There [at the folwark] we worked and were paid for that. One day I went there with my sister. We went to pull the weeds, to weed away barley for the pan. I was only twelve when I went there. In the evening they paid us for the work. 50 [Polish] groshy for pulling the weeds[31]." A new challenge for families was the loss of male members – fathers and elder brothers were mobilized to the Soviet army in 1944[32]. The eldest of children in the family were left with childhood trauma and disabilities for the rest of their lives,

> R.: I was like the oldest child in the family. We had a horse; we had a plot of field. […] I was little, and the horse stepped onto my foot. And over here, right where that hut is, there was a shed, a horse mill. We ground the grain and carried the sheaves. And the mill was in the middle of the yard, and we used horses to power the mill. […] I was also made to work as we had a field, we had everything,

[31] Interview with a woman, DOB 1930, recorded in the town of Tovste, Zalishchyky district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Anna Chebotariova.

[32] Interview with a woman, DOB 1931, recorded in the village of Hlibiv, Husiatyn district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Anna Wylegała.

> but we did not have enough hands to work. It was my mother, father, and me. I was the oldest. […][33]

> R.: Under Polish rule, I went to school. I only had four years of education. Then my mother went down with joint inflammation. She stayed at the hospital. And I was twelve and had to do everything as there was no one else who could do it. […] I was the oldest, so I had to do all the work. I was the most senior. […][34]

> R.: […] Father left in March, it was mobilization, and father went to war. Mother was left alone with three children. […] It was the beginning of spring. We had to sow and plow. Mother did the plowing with horses, plowed everything as we needed bread for ourselves and bread that we gave away to the state. And I was the oldest – I was born in 1933, my brother was born in 1936, and my little sister Hannusia was born in 1943. And we were responsible for everything. […] I had both to make meals and to get firewood to cook […] (*pause*). Some childhood it was. Maybe that is why I have weak health. My spine is curved because I did hard labor as a child when I was 11–12 years old[35].

Financial difficulties had a much more profound impact on the children than on the parents as they could not explain it for themselves. The children, owing to their age, did not understand the drastic changes. They still remembered the previous well-being of the family. Thus, the recurrent plotline in the interview with a woman born in 1930 is the story of the well-off pre-war life of her family. Her father came back from labor migration "in America" and had a large household in the center of the village, and the house had electricity and water pipes, a rarity at the time. Holding a special place in the woman's memory are the first years of the Soviet rule – the repressions and exile of village residents to Siberia[36]. The orphaned kids felt sudden extreme changes, "I would go to the forest, wearing the straw shoes, and come back carrying some sticks on the shoulders. The sticks were wet, moist, and did not want to catch fire. How about that? Well, but we wanted to eat, and things happened. Things happened (*cries*). Of course, when my mother and father were alive, I had it good (*pause*)[37]."

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[33] Interview with a woman, DOB 1927, recorded in the village of Kuriany, Berezhany district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Marta Havryshko.

[34] Interview with a woman, DOB 1933, recorded in the town of Tovste, Zalishchyky district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Anna Chebotariova.

[35] Interview with a woman, DOB 1930, recorded in the town of Tovste, Zalishchyky district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Nataliya Otrishchenko.

[36] Interview with a woman, DOB 1926, recorded in the village of Osivtsi, Buchach district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Wiktoria Kudela-Świątek.

[37] Interview with a woman, DOB 1932, recorded in the town of Tovste, Zalishchyky

Amid financial hardships, the common theme in many interviews was the thirst for knowledge that the narrators had. The desire to study opened a path to school and/or student life in the city, offering a chance to get away from the village. Nevertheless, during the war ruin and the hungry days, parents were less worried about their children's future. "I really wanted to study, but my mother did not let me because we needed to work in the field. […] So that is how we lived."[38] "I say, "Mom, I want to attend school after all." I went again, signed up, and attended classes for a month. Then my mother says, "You're not going to school today. We are going sowing"[39], women born in the early 1930ˢ reminisced of their childhood years. Working hard, the children left school despite their abilities and the desire to study.

The grief of losing a parent or both parents (mostly the father) was a life-long tragedy. "I was born here in Tovste. In [19]32, on July 15," a woman born in 1932 starts the conversation. "I have lived here, but my life was not very happy because my father was arrested in [19]41, so you can imagine what my life was like[40]." The pain of loss experienced by the narrator, whose father was repressed in June 1941 upon retreat on the Soviet government, and, as a result, the non-fulfilled potential for studying due to the need to help her single mother are brought up on several occasions during the interview, "And I wanted to [study], mother says, "She [the girlfriend] has a father." The father was a tailor. And she doesn't want to go to school, and I feel tortured because of that school. You're not going. Let it go. […] She later continued with her studies, and I stayed at home. […] That was my life. My life wasn't that great, it wasn't as I would like it to be, but it was good as it was. Mom protected me. She never wanted me to be less than others, even though I was because I did not have a father, but my mom did not want me to see it" [41].

The children were susceptible to being different from their peers, and they still remember it very well until this day. Still, they stood out among peers primarily due to deep emotional experiences. During the raid of Ukrainian underground in the village, according to the daughter of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army Riy (smallest unit) commander, a Soviet soldier "[…] stood aside and started looking closely, saying, "Find out if there are children of Banderivtsi here." The

district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Anna Chebotariova.

[38] Interview with a woman, DOB 1930, recorded in the town of Tovste, Zalishchyky district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Anna Chebotariova.

[39] Interview with a woman, DOB 1933, recorded in the town of Tovste, Zalishchyky district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Anna Chebotariova.

[40] Ibid.

[41] Interview with a woman, DOB 1938, recorded in the village of Hlibiv, Husiatyn district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Marta Havryshko.

children, we had no idea, we were just playing, and the man was watching. I was looking at him. I was thinking that my father was in the forest, that shots were being fired there, that my mom was perhaps already gone, as was my father. I was worried. So that is how our life was"[42].

Particularly noticeable in the stories about childhood years was the connection (or lack thereof) with parents, especially with the father, whose life during the war years was under more risk than the life of the mother. Not only death took away fathers from their children. At the time, children grew up without a father because the latter was in labor migration, in the army, in the underground, repressed or exiled by the Soviet government. Not infrequently, the roles overlapped, and the absence of a father in their life was practically incessant. "[…] my father was not home; he was in Argentina. […] Bam, and he left for nine years," the woman born in 1923 reminisces. […] "Father came back, and my brother said it was a strange guy and asked why we gave food to a stranger (*laughing*), and shouted that father was inside the chest. Maybe you don't know, but we used to have these chests in the village, filled with items, and my father's picture was inside […]. [Father] died in Arhangelsk. I.: So, they took him after you, right? R.: (*crying*) And mother Hanna. I.: And your mother, did she also die in Arhangelsk? Or when did she die? R.: No, mother escaped. […]"[43].

The child's voice conveys direct and consequential emotions, the feeling of despair and pain[44]. A traumatic experience for the 11-year-old girl was witnessing the arrest and cart-away of her grandfather to Siberia in June of 1941; the rest of her family went into hiding[45],

> R.: 1941, around the same time in June, they took away my grandpa for being a kurkul (a derogatory name for rich peasants). My mother's father. My grandpa. Eighty-years old. […] So, I remember when they took him to cart away. […] I also remember my mother grabbing a bag and throwing in some clothes. Then, of course, we had some pigs fat at home. We threw in some bread and pig fat. […] I took it all and ran up the hill. I was eleven then. So, I ran up the hill. […]

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[42] Interview with a woman, DOB 1923, recorded in the village of Stratyn, Rohatyn district of Ivano-Frankivsk oblast. Interviewer Marta Havryshko.

[43] In current memories of the experienced, we can trace a child's voice that expresses emotions of the past and an adult's voice that represents thoughts from the standpoint of a person interviewed in the present. Dana L. Wolf, in her book about the memories of Jewish children from the Netherlands (Wolf 2007), who hid from the Nazis during the war, defined this issue as polyphonic voices (Wylegała 2015, 296).

[44] Interview with a woman, DOB 1930, recorded in the village of Koropets, Monastyryska district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Anna Wylegała.

[45] Interview with a woman, DOB 1927, recorded in the village of Kuriany, Berezhany district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Marta Havryshko.

> And the horses were already brought from the valley to take away my grandfather. He was eighty years old. […] And they took away my grandfather. I was running very fast. I stood in the middle of the road, and they drove up with grandpa. […] And my grandpa […] I remember it so well; I cried so hard. I hugged him tight around the neck *(crying)*. […] They took away my grandpa in early June [of 1941], and on June 22, the German war started.

Traumatic memory is remarkably distinct, overbearing, steady, and uncontrollable. Gadi Benezer, a researcher of (non)expression of trauma in biographical narrations, singles out a signal of trauma called "intrusive image" (BenEzer 1999, 35) – scenes or images of a traumatic event, or a particular fraction of it, which come up involuntarily throughout the narration as quick "flashes." These flashes distract the person's train of thought and interrupt the intended flow of the narration when the "intrusive image" is uncontrollable and comes up in the narration involuntarily.

In some stories of family drama, a "minor" personal trauma seems to be hiding behind the "major" trauma. A short story of a woman born in 1927 about relatives and her own family shifted into a detailed story of the tragedy of 1945 murder of her father, who was head of a collective farm, committed by the Ukrainian nationalist underground, and the continuation of personal grief in the enumeration of the series of murders in the village with the tragedy of her family "embedded" into it. "He was head of the collective farm. Then Banderivtsi took him and killed him. God only knows where. […] He was head of the collective farm. Banderivtsi took him. God knows where. I don't know. I don't know where they killed him," the woman reiterated as if apologizing for not knowing yet[46]. Apologizing is one of the ways of expressing one's own experiences and emotions as trauma (BenEzer 1999, 35). And the death of little sister gets lost in the hopeful story about a false message about father's death at war. "[…] We received an obituary card about the father. It was on Mykhailo's name day. I know that my mother cried a lot on Mykhailo's name day. Then for a long time, there were no letters. In March, in late March, my sister, my younger sister Hannusia went down with diphtheria. Mother did not know what was wrong. […] She was eighteen months old, and diphtheria killed her. And when the child was carried out of the house to be put on a cart and carried to the church and then to the cemetery, we received a letter from father. Father let us know that he got shell-shocked"[47].

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[46] Interview with a woman, DOB 1933, recorded in the town of Tovste, Zalishchyky district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Anna Chebotariova.

[47] Research shows that the significance of emotional words for the general emotion

Several respondents grew up without both parents, with an older sister or brother until they got married or roamed between relatives. The loss of the nearest and dearest was articulated first – immediately in the narration, but very briefly as if in passing[48]. Only in one conversation the female narrator seemed to go back in time and described the most dramatic moments of her experiences – the deaths of nearest and dearest and loss of home, "My parents were killed on the frontier. When the frontier was here, my father, mother, my sister, who was betrothed, perished. She left behind a boy, seven years old; they all died on the frontier. We were near the frontier. […] As they were retreating, the Russians and the Germans were attacking, my father was shot, and he died. Father lived for another day. […] My brother and I were the only ones in the family who survived. The Germans killed my sister, my father, and my mother. Mother was trying to escape to the pit. No, it was not a mother who was escaping. It was my sister who was running to the pit with a small kid. And he jumped in front of her, mother took the child from her, and that was when he shot and hit my mother, and everybody died. My brother and I were exiled; we lived in [a different village]. And that was it" [49].

Trauma in life stories is made of scattered and fragmented memories (for more, see Leydesdorff *et al*. 1999). Particularly noticeable is the shift to a completely different, neutral topic,

> R.: My mum died, so an orphan. Mum died in [19]41. I was fourteen when she died. And my dad was in America. […] He was in America; he wanted to take us there, sent us the card. But he had a lover. He had a lover, and when she heard about his plans, she poisoned him, and he died.
>
> I.: So, you practically lived without parents?
>
> R.: Well, naturally. We had a new teacher, Ruthenian. They weren't Russian, but they taught both in Russian and in Ukrainian. Back in the day, we would say the Ruthenian language. Ruthenian priest, Ruthenian language, Ruthenian holidays, not Ukrainian holidays, that's what people would say[50].

Such interruptions are also apparent in broken sentences, incomplete storylines, and silence. "I don't remember," said the man born in 1925 as if sum-

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expressed is stronger in later parts of the interview and also after open questions and questions asking for definition (Truong *et al.* 2013).

[48] Interview with a woman, DOB 1926, recorded in the village of Osivtsi, Buchach district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Wiktoria Kudela-Świątek.

[49] Interview with a woman, DOB 1927, recorded in the village of Vyshnivchyk, Terebovlia district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Anna Wylegała.

[50] Interview with a man, DOB 1925, recorded in the town of Rohatyn, Ivano-Frankivsk oblast. Interviewer Marta Havryshko.

marizing and so as not to torture himself with memories and to escape the trauma. He never mentioned his mother's death, "R.: People said my father was a good singer. […] He died. He was a tailor. He traveled across villages but lived in the town. We lived; the parents lived *(tries to remember)*. I forgot I don't remember. I.: So where did he die? In what town you were saying? R.: He died there, in the village. I.: In the village, right? And when did he die? R.: In [19]28. […] I was three years old. I.: 3 years old? So, you practically don't remember him? R.: I don't remember"[51].

"Stolen Childhood" affected the rest of her life and identity. Standing out among others is the story of a half-orphan raised by her grandmother (mother died when she was two, so she almost did not know her), her father remarried, and the new wife did not acknowledge the girl. The narrator solely "worked hard for them [father and stepmother]," got married at thirty, which is late according to the village life standards, and did not mention her personal life for the entirety of the conversation. The woman comes from a family with German roots; she gave the interview under her maiden name, which she cherishes and which everybody knows: "I.: Here in the village everyone knows you as [naming the last name]? R.: Yes. […] Also, people might use the nickname Lioyzova. […] But in general … I go after my last name… I really love this last name now. I say, as much as I listen to the radio, I have never heard a last name like this. A last name like mine, like the one I have, you cannot come across. […] You need to go to Poland. There they found it. Or to Germany"[52].

Being an orphan not only took away childhood but also determined fate. Narrators are not too wordy when it comes to personal life, let alone if they are orphans. "[…] he went to war, was injured in the leg and had type II disability," such was the concise testimony of husband provided by a complete orphan, whose parents died during the war and who lived by her elder brother until getting married[53]. "You know, if some handy work were required, he would do it. "I will help you with any handy work." Only the sticks, so his leg did not bend, and it was shorter, like 15 cm shorter. He had three surgeries." Similar to these, despite the pretend laughter, were memories of her wedding, "We would have weddings at home at the time. Just like that, we had a violin playing, a tambourine, such as the wedding (*laughing*). I.: Did many people attend? R.: Well, yes, you know that the whole family was to be invited. All the family members, neighbors were

[51] Interview with a woman, DOB 1937, recorded in the village of Utikhovychi, Peremyshliany district of Lviv oblast. Interviewer Marta Havryshko.

[52] Interview with a woman, DOB 1926, recorded in the village of Osivtsi, Buchach district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Wiktoria Kudela-Świątek.

[53] Interview with a woman, DOB 1927, recorded in the village of Vyshnivchyk, Terebovlia district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Anna Wylegała.

invited, because we celebrated at home. We boiled beetroot, leaf vegetables … ". At the same time, another woman[54] disclosed the prospects of marriage for an orphan in a post-war village using the example of her own sister who "was poor, had many suitors, but they would tell her, "I would marry you if you had at least half a *shnur* [cord or plug] (45 m) of a field". But where could she get the field? She did not have it. So, she married this guy. He was a specialist – slaughtered pigs, helped slaughter, was a miller but blind in one eye. He did not have an eye. He was blind but had a house, and she agreed to marry him. But he was the kind of guy who could do everything." The narrator did not say anything about herself. Silence is apparent when the narration steers away from other people's lives, for instance, when it has to do with courting, marriage, and the birth of children. The narrator may not have experienced those events in her life, so she had nothing to tell about it. This does not mean, though, that they were not hurt by what could have happened (Rolph and Atkinson 2010, 56).

Children were much more sensitive and susceptible than adults when it came to violence. They were facing the same harsh reality as grown-ups but were more vulnerable. Unlike grown-ups, children did not have an understanding of/ understand the situation and felt much more confused by the events. The respondents remembered the feeling of anxiety and uncertainty, the fear for their lives amid the persecution of Jews:

> I.: The Germans came and threw the Jews out right away, or did they stay here for some time?
> R.: They fought for some time. But when they started fighting, I saw with my own eyes how the German man did the beating. […] I was throwing hemp in the [river] Strypa, and my skirt was all wet. I saw him beating someone, so I got out of the river and went through the vegetable garden. I ran to her yard and told the women, "Run! A German, over there, near Strypa," I said, "was beating some man!" How would I know if he caught a Jew or someone like me? And he beat him near Strypa. The moment I saw it, I started running … So, we escaped and came back at night. […] We were escaping past the cemetery and returned home at night. I was myself thinking about the Germans. I felt that if the Germans established their rule, they were awful people. It would be impossible to negotiate anything. I don't speak their language. So, how do I talk to them[55]?

[54] Interview with a woman, DOB 1927, recorded in the village of Osivtsi, Buchach district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Anna Wylegała.

[55] Interview with a woman, DOB 1927, recorded in the village of Kuriany, Berezhany district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Marta Havryshko.

The image of the enemy was hazy and blurred, in which both the Soviet and the German governments embody evil. In the memories of a woman who lost her father, head of the collective farm, at the hands of the Ukrainian nationalist underground in post-war years, the German convoy of Jews to execution overlapped with the image of the repressive Soviet government. In this way, displacement happened when one story was replaced with another: " […] Moskals were passing by carrying rifles, and the Jews were walking in front of them. Moskals were behind them, urging the Jews on. I.: And what were they saying to the Jews when walking them? R.: How would I know? The Germans were saying things. How would I know what the Germans said? And what the Jews said? They cried and whaled and cried. What Moskals said? They cried. And the people watched. Some of them were crying; others said nothing. Everyone […] We were afraid to even look at them. It was horrible under Soviet rule[56].

Trauma not only pertains to things that happened to an individual, a family tragedy. The scenes of atrocities forever recorded in memory are the Holocaust. Despite personal grief, fear, and uncertainty of survival during war years, the emotional climax of biographical narratives was the description of shot local Jews which imprinted in the memory. In these episodes of the story, the change of delivery style is particularly evident – narration (story with a sequence of events), when it comes to a traumatic event of the past changes into a different format – a description of a particular event (as a static structure with a so-called "narrative block") (Hrinchenko 2004, 158). The story of the Holocaust, for instance, emerges as a continuation of the story of the post-war exile of Poles as "top of the top" of the absurd possibilities[57]. One of the female narrators, a native of the town of Bibrka in Lviv oblast, as an eight-year-old girl, saw bodies of people shot in a still open grave and has the image of "an open pit" in front of her. You understand, right. And the bodies all looked like they were taken out of water. And it was like that, like that it was"[58].

> R.: Ghet[to] was here, down there near the farmer's market, that's where ghet[to] was. Jews were brought in. Our people went to their homes and took stuff. You know, they could not take everything with them. […] I never wore Jewish clothes. Even now, I don't. And they brought them in. Then later, they were brought to

[56] Interview with a woman, DOB 1933, recorded in the town of Tovste, Zalishchyky district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Anna Chebotariova.

[57] Interview with a woman, DOB 1934, recorded in the town of Bibrka, Peremyshliany district of Lviv oblast. Interviewer Anna Wylegała.

[58] Interview with a woman, DOB 1933, recorded in the town of Tovste, Zalishchyky district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Anna Chebotariova.

> their cemetery and shot there. Blood was running out of that pit. Do you see? Blood was running out. And we lived near the brewery, and a Jew was working there. I don't remember his name. First, a car drove up, and they told him, "Get in; we will give you a lift." He got in. Then his wife and kids. And they understood that they were being taken to execution or something like that. Once I went to the town, and as I was going near the mill, I saw a Jew lying. He was shot, he was wearing a green jacket, and he was shot in the head. His brain was out. I still remember[59].

> R.: You know, I see him as if it was yesterday. […] It was either the 3rd or the 5th of July, as I remember, and the Germans brought the Jews in. […] I remember it so well, God, the Germans with shotguns, dogs on leashes. […] they made the Jews get onto the road. It was raining, and the sun was scorching. It was hot. You see that I remember. And it was raining. And the Jews were pushed to that road, the Catholic cathedral is down that road, and they were pushed towards the [village] of Strilky, […] near the mill. A pit was the dugout. They put a plank across the pit, the Jews stood on that plank, and they shot them. And the people fell into that pit. Some of them were dead, others still alive. You can only imagine the blood bubbling and the odor […][60].

When the Holocaust conversation starts, the phrases "I remember well," "this is how I remember it," "seems like it was yesterday," "what I saw then, I remember till this day" become particularly accentuated and are reiterated: "So they sat over the books, constantly praying, waving, and we, as kids, ran there to watch. They sat reading. Constantly singing, "Red rose, white bloom – we are not coming back to this world" (*cites a line from a song*). This is how I remember it. When they were told to go away, they would get up and walk away singing. I.: Were there any children there, or only men? R.: Not only men. Even one Jewish woman but was also carrying her child on her shoulders. Another woman kept close by and carried her child in her arms. Extremely. Awful death (*with emphasis*)"[61]; "What I remember is that once, when we were coming back from school, they (*coughing*), the Jews were rushed outside for a walk and one young Jewish woman went there, and he shot her, and she, poor thing, squatted

[59] Interview with a woman, DOB 1934, recorded in the town of Bibrka, Peremyshliany district of Lviv oblast. Interviewer Anna Wylegała.

[60] Interview with a woman, DOB 1926, recorded in the village of Osivtsi, Buchach district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Wiktoria Kudela-Świątek.

[61] Interview with a woman, DOB 1930, recorded in the town of Tovste, Zalishchyky district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Anna Chebotariova.

to the ground. I.: Do you remember it? R.: Yes, it all happened in front of my eyes. […] What I saw back then, I remember till this day"[62].

All the narrators were visibly confined to very superficial memories, not diving too deep and dredging up childhood trauma. For instance, when a man born in 1927 told of mass executions by shooting in Buchach, he immediately switched to a half-fictional story of the saved Jewish fellow villager and did not come back to the topic of the Holocaust in the town anymore[63]. Equaled with the traumatic memories of the Holocaust were occasional testimonies of mass shootings conducted in prisons by the Soviet government in June 1941. "They tortured them. There was this cellar there. Large cellars. I was in that cellar. It was covered in blood. […] All the children were brought there so that they could see with their own eyes what they did to our people. I saw that trap. The trap, you know, the old one, maybe you don't remember it, people would call it a concrete well of sorts. And there was this ladder there. They used it to lower people down. There, in that trap, they killed people. I saw the trap. So much blood. Poor people. How they… […] It was an awful funeral. I cannot even express it"[64].

"Drawing the veil": silence

When setting up an interview as a biographical one, we expect the story of life as a chronological sequence starting with childhood years and unraveling further. The events are interlinked. Yet, in reality, respondents rarely tell their story in strict chronological order; they jump between various stages of their life, often coming back to what was partly described or dwell deeper into a much earlier period that they did not witness. As a result, the stories of life experiences voiced are more about emotions and not just about events. Thus, the narration of a life story is already something bigger or more internal than the life story itself. Such narration is connected to consciousness, to the way people reveal or present themselves. Oral sources tell us not just what people did, what they wanted to do, what they believed they were doing, and what they now think they did. "[…] what informants believe is a historical fact (that is, the fact that they believe it) as much as what really happened", A. Portelli reasonably notes

[62] Interview with a man, DOB 1927, recorded in the town of Tovste, Zalishchyky district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Anna Chebotariova.

[63] Interview with a woman, DOB 1930, recorded in the village of Lany, Peremyshliany district of Lviv oblast. Interviewer Anna Wylegała.

[64] Interview with a woman, DOB 1937, recorded in the village of Utikhovychi, Peremyshliany district of Lviv oblast. Interviewer Marta Havryshko.

(Portelli 2003, 40). The specificity of those oral sources that will be deemed "not credible" is the need for explication. "Errors" made by a narrator sometimes provide us with more understanding of the past than the factually accurate stories. In the same way that the interviewers need to realize the emotional energy that may accompany a story, they also need to respect emotions put into non-story, understand the reasons and "meaning" of this silence.

When asked about family and the so-called pre-history of the "social void," narrators did not tell much. They mentioned parents and family households only in passing. In several recorded interviews, a story within a story (Holmes 2017a) catches the eye – telling one's own story along with the story of one of the relatives – father or brother. Interviews with those who were born in the second half of the 1930ˢ are rich in details about the end of the war and post-war years of Soviet rule. At the same time, these are also stories of relatives who were particularly suffering during the hard war years or were recognized for their heroism. Thus, a woman (born in 1937) came from a German family. People "took" her father for a Pole, so the interview started with the uniquely thrilling experience of the little girl – the story of how her father was hiding from the Ukrainian nationalist underground and the Soviet government after the end of the war[65]. Another narrator (born in 1938) spoke in detail about the story of her family, her father, who owned a small restaurant in the village of Skalat Ternopil oblast, who joined the Ukrainian nationalist underground after being drafted to the Red Army and was Riy guide. She also told about the repressions, her family in hiding, her mother coming out of hiding with the kids, the unknown fate of her father, perception of the family of an underground member in the post-war community of the village[66].

Not personal life stories usually describe heroic feats, offer a national narrative of the war (heroic participation in the war, patriotism). Such narratives primarily tell about the father. It is the story of a father who participated in World War I, who in his native village was doing mobilization of volunteers for the Ukrainian-Polish war of 1918–1919, was arrested by the Polish government, and was released from prison by sheer luck[67]. Or, for instance, if we take an interview with the man born in the village of Kniahynychi Ivano-Frankivsk oblast, the village known as the center of active operations of the Ukrainian

[65] Interview with a woman, DOB 1938, recorded in the village of Hlibiv, Husiatyn district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Marta Havryshko.

[66] Interview with a man, DOB 1927, recorded in the town of Tovste, Zalishchyky district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Anna Chebotariova.

[67] Interview with a man, DOB 1934, recorded in the town of Rohatyn, Ivano-Frankivsk oblast. Interviewer Anna Chebotariova.

nationalist underground in the second half of the 1940s[68]. The narrator's father, a member of OUN (Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists), and UPA (Ukrainian Insurgent Army), suffered repressive action from the totalitarian regime in 1945 and died in exile. In 1947 the son, following in his father's footsteps, joined the ranks of the underground movement, where he stayed until 1951. To avoid eviction, the family was hiding at the places of relatives in different neighboring villages for several years.

As a small boy at the time of the war, one of the men (born in 1936) provided stories based on what his mother and relatives told him. He had a strong interest in the history of the native village and neighboring territories, so he said of things he did not remember too well – the landlord's manor and household, hired labor, the fate of the landlord and his family, the aggravation of the Ukrainian-Polish conflict during the war[69]. His "personal" life story was topped with layers of "strangers" stories. When analyzing published memories of World War II, Serhii Yekelchyk offers an apt example of a non-biased memory narrative by Dmytro Malakov from Kyiv, "At the time of occupation, the author was four years old, and when the Germans left, he was seven. That is why to a large extent, he is basing his narration on the stories told by his family and the pictures of his older brother Heorhii. The family was apparently counting on the return of the Red Army, which meant reunion with the father and brother. Even more so, this stance after so many years is still affecting the narrative of Mr. Malakov, echoing the war memories of many others. Or even the majority of Kyivans" (Yekelchyk 2020, 159).

Modern scholars more and more often turn to "secondary memories" – the thoughts of not the actual eyewitnesses but their descendants as translators of memories on landmark events experienced by their relatives, which according to Marianne Hirsch, are called post-memory. What is important in post-memory is the relationship that the generation after those who witnessed cultural or collective trauma bears to the experiences of those who came before, incidents that they "remember" only utilizing the stories, images, and behaviors among which they grew up. These, as a rule, traumatic experiences are transmitted so deeply and effectively that they become memories in their own right (Hirsch 2008, 106–107). The dramatic events experienced by ancestors determine the personal formation of the next generation and, what is more, the feelings, experiences, emotions in family memories are so deep that not personal mem-

[68] Interview with a man, DOB 1936, recorded in the village of Koropets, Monastyryska district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Anna Wylegała.

[69] Interview with a man, DOB 1933, recorded in the town of Zolochiv, Lviv oblast. Interviewer Nataliya Otrishchenko.

ories become personal while authentic memories remain in the background and even risk being displaced. Images of the past, thus, are constructed not with the help of recall but via projecting with imaginary constructs (Bodnar 2020).

A telling sign of trauma is the inability to tell a story. Commonly, inner turmoil, feelings, and the experience of one's attitude towards reality, personal or social life are not verbalized. Non-verbal behavior – the way people speak, the expression on their face, and their body language – reflect cognitive and emotional aspects of their emotional state. In interactional situations, bodily gestures, as well as our voice, can point to tensions (Katto 2018, 54). A pause of various lengths or hesitation is often connected to planning effort and cognitive load during the narration. Non-articulated emotions have a significant impact on convictions and memory. Many meanings that constrain and direct social acts are unconscious, and they are not necessarily open to the subject to report them to the researcher (Jones 1998, 49). As Peter Munro accurately remarked, "we need to attend to the silences as well as what is said" (Rolph and Atkinson 2010, 59). Yet, here a dilemma comes up – to ask or not to ask specifying questions, additional questions which may potentially be traumatic for the narrators? It is permissible to encourage the person to continue talking about the topics they want to discuss and give them space to talk (Jones 1998, 51). Gadi Benezer gives two valuable pieces of advice. Firstly, you need to be traditionally attentive (to the context of the conversation, to what the person feels during the narration, to the questions that should (not) be asked, etc.). Nonetheless, some narrators have their trauma "packed"; they are distant, it is difficult for them to believe that someone who has not gone through the same experience could indeed understand them. That is why the second piece of advice is to extend the limits of conversation about trauma as much as possible – let the narration flow, listen attentively, and not ask too many questions (BenEzer 1999, 41). Researchers also mention the importance of not asking questions about trauma immediately after specification / additional question and wait when it re-emerges in the conversation again; be attentive to the verbalized signals – "I don't even know", "I have never thought about it" and others.

One of the informants, born in 1933,[70] throughout the whole interview only briefly mentioned local Jews, even though one of his best childhood friends was a Jew. The story of the mass extermination of Jews that he witnessed was told only towards the end of the recording. The question about childhood friends was asked by the present third party who knew the story; hence the interviewer could

[70] Interview with a woman, DOB 1923, recorded in the village of Stratyn, Rohatyn district of Ivano-Frankivsk oblast. Interviewer Marta Havryshko.

potentially have never found out about it. It was visibly complicated for the narrator to describe the shootings in the summer of 1943. As a boy, he would graze cows in the field and would witness the escape and massacre of the Jews:

> R.: What else can I tell you?
> I.: Can you tell a bit more about your childhood when you were little? You said you had a friend Petro, a Pole, who then left, that you grazed cows together. Where there any other children? Who were you friends with?
> R.: Well, I had… I lived in the village. I had good friends – it's the village, you know, friends, people are nice – we were all equal, there were no extremely poor or extremely rich people.
> Third-party: Some Jew, you would always tell about.
> R.: Who?
> Third-party: The Jewish boy.
> R.: The Jewish boy. Yes, the Jewish boy, What about the Jewish boy? There were nice Jewish men and children. My best friend in school – Volko – was a Jew. We were friends since the first form. […] We grew up, finished the first year of school. Then the war started, and Volko was rarely, and then Volko disappeared… There was also a girl who came to us, girls… they were half-orphaned, their mother died. We had a cultured Jew in the village. I don't remember his name… […] He suffered a tragic fate … they murdered him. He had two daughters, and one of them also went to school. Even under the Germans, she started going to school with us. She was very quiet; she got along well with the girls, you know. Then they were killed. […]
> I.: And you never saw them after that?
> R.: No, I didn't, no. I didn't see her. That concentration camp in Hrushka, the end was really tragic. They, the Jews, built the road, made the bridge. […] They understood that they could be murdered, and they went back to the camp, out of the [village] Slovity and down the road… and started running away. […] They ran not to the left to the forest but to the field. The sun was setting. We were about to herd the cows home as evening was approaching. And they all, poor things, ran away there, to the field. […] The Germans had motorcycles, cars […] they outran them and blocked the way, so the Jews ran straight into, you know, straight into their hands. The Germans started shooting. Several Jews died. So, they turned back like a herd. And the Germans killed them there. […]

The memories of the Holocaust were accompanied by the words "to be afraid," "fear," "terror." The tremendous childhood turmoil was a constant fear of violence. And the children's curiosity was restrained by fear. "Thus, in Rohatyn, there were mass shootings. Did you see those mass executions of Jews

in Rohatyn? we asked the woman from the village of Stratyn, Ivano-Frankivsk oblast[71], born in 1923. "I steered clear because I was afraid. It is not very interesting, you know, to watch such things. They said people said that there was a log, they would stand on it, and shots were fired, so they fell down and seemed to be alive; they still moved. Whether it is true or not, I cannot say because I don't know."

Amid most of the stories about the Holocaust as fear and violence, one conspicuous narration draws attention as it is accompanied with laughter: "I.: Do you remember about the Jews. R.: (*laughing*) […] We stood on a bridge and watched the Germans escort the Jews. They were going to shoot them. […] And there were ditches. And a wall… They dug out ditches and put them inside… You would think, I saw that (*laughing*). Did I understand anything? And they were shooting. And we started running away. And they were shot. Some of them were still alive. Yes, they, when they were walking along the road, poor things, they were lamenting, lamenting loudly, and crying. They carried the children on their shoulders, held them by the hand. They held the little children by the hand. I was watching that, and I can't… When I understood what was going on, I thought "oh"… And we girls, we ran there to watch. They were lamenting, and we were watching. But we were only twelve. We stood far off. We were afraid. We were far off"[72]. The narrator herself emphasized the discrepancy between her childhood experience and her present memories. Children took what they saw for an adventure, and only with time did they understand the tragedy of the Holocaust. Still, this is a defense mechanism – a child's perception of the event neutralizes it (Wylegała 2015, 302).

A typical phenomenon of the time described was international Ukrainian-Polish marriages. A considerable number of our interlocutors were children of a Polish mother and a Ukrainian father, which is understandable because of the post-war deportation of Poles to Poland. Yet, all of them claimed their Ukrainian identity and recorded the interview only in Ukrainian. Growing up in a Ukrainian-Polish family, several women have noted their studies at "Ukrainian school" and going to an Orthodox church, not a Catholic cathedral. "My sister and I were baptized at the Catholic cathedral; my brother was christened at the Orthodox church. Sons followed into the footsteps of fathers; daughters took after mothers. Whether they liked it or not. I did not want to, and I was made to; I didn't understand it… because I always went to the church with my father. When I went

[71] Interview with a woman, DOB 1930, recorded in the village of Koropets, Monastyryska district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Anna Wylegała.

[72] Interview with a woman, DOB 1927, recorded in the village of Koropets, Monastyryska district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Anna Wylegała.

to school, I signed up for the Ukrainian religion, for I didn't know anything Polish, and my father was quite a Ukrainian nationalist. So, I had religious studies at school, but the Catholic priests transferred me from the Ukrainian religion to Polish. By force. Because I was a Polish child and my mother was Polish. While I studied at school, I was forced to attend a Catholic cathedral, but as soon as I grew up, I went to church together with the girls"[73]; "I was a small kid, they had no help, so mother and father sent me to the kindergarten, there used to be kindergartens by Catholic cathedrals. […] Later, it seems to me it was [19]41. I went to school. It was a kind of school kept by the Poles. "I.: So, you went to the Catholic cathedral, right? R.: I went to an Orthodox church. To an Orthodox church. I studied at a Ukrainian school. […] When I was a little child, and they had nowhere to take me to, then yes. Mom would send me there because she did not have anywhere else […] where she could leave me, then yes, but, in general, I attended a Ukrainian school"[74].

Some interviewees were reluctant to speak of "Polish" I.: […] And mother went to a Catholic cathedral? R.: Yes, my mother was Polish, admitted the man born in 1923. "I did not want to bring this up (*laughter*), And father let her […]. I went both to a Catholic cathedral and an Orthodox church. But I didn't often go to the Catholic cathedral; it was an Orthodox church most of the time"[75]. The respondents would admit that multinational marriages were concluded for vested interest: "[…] They wanted to have a field very much, and my mother was rich, father was not very poor, but he wanted the field, so he asked my mother to marry him. They did not get along very well, but they had children (*laughter*). […] He asked my mother; she lived across the road, he asked a Polish woman to marry him. Because my grandmother owned, she was richer and owned more fields, and she had three children, my grandmother, but the brother, my mother's brother, went to the Polish war and never came back. She had a daughter Nina and grandmother bequeathed the field to my mother; my mother was rich, and my father was handsome. That is why. If I had pictures, I don't have any. Father was very handsome. So, that's that"[76]. In summary, we receive quite a contradictory interpretation of international marriages: from complete approval to aggravation of the Ukrainian-Polish relations before the war ("No, no, abso-

[73] Interview with a woman, DOB 1933, recorded in the town of Tovste, Zalishchyky district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Anna Chebotariova.

[74] Interview with a man, DOB 1923, recorded in the town of Bibrka, Peremyshliany district of Lviv oblast. Interviewer Marta Havryshko.

[75] Interview with a woman, DOB 1927, recorded in the village of Ushnia, Zolochiv district of Lviv oblast. Interviewer Marta Havryshko.

[76] Interview with a man, DOB 1925, recorded in the town of Rohatyn, Ivano-Frankivsk oblast. Interviewer Marta Havryshko.

lutely not, we did not use to have it before. We had Poles, and we had Ukrainians. It started right before the war, you hear me, right before the war", "No, they were not much different, but before the war, Ukrainians and Poles started becoming different already"), to family animosity of this ground ("R: […] Father lived here, in Rohatyn, like grandfather and grandmother. Father also had an elder sister, she lived in America, yes in America, but when father died, she said, "Brother is gone, we don't need his family." I.: So, she didn't acknowledge you? R.: No, there was no love lost there. I.: No love lost? But why, how do you think? R.: It was such a family, maybe? […] My mother's family – brother, his name was Vitos, it was his last name. So, he lived in Horodko. […] He had a family, a son, but they did not have a good relationship. I.: Did you not have a good relationship with your mother? And why was that? R.: Because she married a "kaban" (hog). They called Ukrainians "kaban," "świnia," [pig] that was their thing"[77]).

The respondents were similarly reluctant to remember the Ukrainian-Polish conflict during the war. As might be seen from the story below, a woman born in 1930, who was a teenager at the time and ought to remember, especially the burndown of the neighboring Polish village of Pluzhnyky, did not want to touch on that memories and reiterated twice that she "was a young girl at the time,"

> I.: So, was there animosity between Poles and Ukrainians towards the end of the war?
> R.: Yes, there was, there was.
> I.: And what was happening?
> R.: How would I know? It was something political. But I was still a girl, so I don't know.
> I.: Were there cases when people were killed?
> R.: Yes, there were killings.
> I.: And who was killed here?
> R.: Well, I know that Ukrainians killed Poles, and Poles killed Ukrainians. Like that. But I was still a young girl; how would I remember?
> I.: And do you know about the village of Pluzhnyky?
> R.: Pluzhnyky, yes.
> I.: What happened to that village?
> R.: Pluzhnyky, I will tell you what happened. The village was inhabited solely by Poles. Maybe some Ukrainians were living among them. So those hiding in

[77] Interview with a woman, DOB 1930, recorded in the village of Koropets, Monastyryska district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Anna Wylegała.

the forests… They set Pluzhnyky on fire. But I was still a young girl. I only know what people were saying. It happened after the war.[78]

A man born in 1925, a native of the village of Osivtsi, Ternopil oblast, was visibly unwilling to dwell deeper into the Polish-Ukrainian conflict in the village. A separate storyline in this interview is his service in the Soviet Army. He was mobilized in 1944, of which he told in great detail, and came back to the village in 1948, so he did not mention the Ukrainian underground. Still, he stayed in the village during the war and should have known about increased tension between Ukrainians and Poles.

I.: I want to ask you about the Poles.
R.: And what about the Poles? The Poles were a bit, you know, situations were different. I know there were different situations. What can I tell you? They did not kill anyone, nothing like that.
I.: Did not kill?
R.: But that was after, after the war, supposedly, when I was not in the village. I don't know; they allegedly ratted many people out.
I.: Ratted out?
R.: Yes, they had their own police, and our people were not hired anywhere. So, they did what they wanted.
I.: But our partisan movement already started? Did they exact revenge a little?
R.: I don't know about the partisans. I cannot tell you anything about the partisans. When I came back to the village, there were no partisans left, and they were all shot.
I.: Can you tell me another thing – were there many Polish families that our people killed?
R.: I don't know.
I.: How is that? Over there, where the Virgin Mary statue is, if you take the main road, where the blue Virgin Mary statue is, a house there, a Polish house, and people say a Polish family lived there who were killed by our people?
R.: I don't know. I know that one family was killed up on the hill. But who killed them, that I don't know.
I.: Killed on the hill? Were there cases when Poles killed one of ours?
R.: How do I know, when I was leaving for the army, such things did not happen.

[78] Interview with a man, DOB 1925, recorded in the village of Osivtsi, Buchach district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Marta Havryshko.

Soon after that, the interviewer came back to the topic of inter-ethnic conflict and asked, "Why did the people not like the Poles so much? Why did our people torture them so much later?" And in response, she heard somewhat of a denial of her question and then a short story of how the animosity developed, which was summarized by the words "I am telling you too much," "R.: What was the reason for dislike? It was something about the nation that was disliked: some people don't like Russians, others dislike Poles, some don't like Ukrainians and beat them. It was the same reason. The Poles rose, and the Ukrainian war started. Poles started picking fights with Ukrainians. Because America helped, or whatever, they put Poland back up. I am telling you too much"[79].

Direct questions regarding sensitive topics of inter-ethnic confrontations proved to be inefficient. Examples provided below are bright illustrations of this: "I.: What was the reason for dislike? Why did our people torture them so much later?" R.: What was the reason for dislike? It was something, it was something about the nation that was disliked: […]"; "I: I want to ask you about the Poles. R.: And what about the Poles? The Poles were a bit, you know, situations were different. I know there were different situations. What can I tell you? They did not kill anyone, nothing like that"; "I: Could you also tell me about fighting the Poles in [19]44. R.: Nobody beat the Poles like that. Poles left this place […]" and others. Direct questions produce more politically correct answers that are loyal towards the other nation. Using such questions concerning hidden or suppressed memories is not efficient; such memories are revealed in a spontaneous biographical narration, which puts everything in place. The story of a woman born in 1927, which tells about the tragedy of the murder of her father, head of the collective farm, by the Ukrainian nationalist underground in 1947, continues the enumeration of a series of murders of Poles and Ukrainians in the village.

> I.: Could you also tell me about fighting the Poles in [19]44.
> R.: Nobody beat the Poles like that. Poles left the village before that, and they went to the village of Opushna. […] From there, they left for Poland. Nobody killed the Poles in our village. They all left. Nobody killed the Poles in our village.
> I.: And who is Cichocki?
> R.: Cichocki was also burnt by the Banderas.
> I.: And who was he?
> R.: Well. I know, he was a Pole, and that's it. […]

[79] Interview with a woman, DOB 1927, recorded in the village of Kuriany, Berezhany district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Marta Havryshko.

I.: So, Cichocki was killed and that Ulan [family].

R.: Yes.

I.: And maybe someone else?

R.: There was another family that lived by the mill. I don't know what their name was.[80]

Only some respondents openly spoke of the confrontation between Ukrainians and Poles during the war ("it was such hatred," "the hatred was so strong," "because there was animosity between the Poles and the Ukrainians"), "R.: That is how we lived. Each second house: Pole, Ukrainian, Pole, Ukrainian. It was the whole street. I.: So, everything was mixed up? R.: Yes. It was mixed up a lot. It was such hatred. If it were a wedding, there would be Ukrainians and Poles, they drank some horilka, and started picking up a fight, then started fighting. It was a frequent occasion that a fight broke out during a wedding, and the wedding could not even end properly. I.: And why was that? R.: It was such strong hatred"[81].

Dominant in the testimony is an openly pro-Ukrainian discourse. When voicing memories of nationalist activism, the narrators, as a rule, remembered grave or painful events – the experience of arrest and torture, the death of nearest and dearest. It might be because, Carrie Hamilton stresses, that similar stories are closely linked to the rhetoric of fight, suffering, and sacrifice, and, consequently, will unlikely be spontaneous; they illustrate the "social character of individual feelings," "I am not suggesting that such memories are not painful for the speakers; rather, following [William M.] Reddy, I argue that they are examples of the social nature of individual feelings and also of the dangers of reading what he calls "emotive" either as expressions or denials of "true feeling," individual or collective" (Hamilton 2010, 91–92).

The memories of pre-war Soviet atrocities and post-war mass repressions against locals, the stories of Ukrainian national fight, and suffering were pushed to the background by the testimony about the massacre of Jews and the deportation of Poles. The Jews who were interested in the Holocaust, for instance, were not told about "self" ("They [Jewish delegation] want to know how Ukrainians tortured Jews. Ukrainian police stayed in Koropets; did they beat the Jews or not. That was the point of their [Jewish] interest. I felt that I could never afford conversations like that. I tried to do it the way it, in fact, was. If something

[80] Interview with a woman, DOB 1931, recorded in the village of Hlibiv, Husiatyn district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Anna Wylegała.

[81] Interview with a man, DOB 1932, recorded in the village of Koropets, current Monastyryska district of Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Marta Havryshko.

like that happened, then I don't know. If, for instance, a German shot a Jewish woman, well (*pause*), she was a fine Jewish woman, lived over there, above the river, not far from here. Gestapo commandant from Buchach came here and he, as people say, had a relationship with her, in the presence of parents and others"[82]), neither did they provide detail (in the present conversation) about the locals from the Ukrainian assisting police ("they are not with us anymore"), unlike the stories about neighbors, "I.: Who of the locals was in the police? R.: They have passed away already. They joined the ranks of the police; at first, they did, but when they started arresting OUN members, then locals did not join anymore; they did not want to join. I.: But someone still had to? R: Those were all outsiders. Here is Zhyzhnomyr village. There was a policeman, and he was murdered […]"[83].

Not in their village, but in neighboring villages ("in villages around here") in single candid memories, "the nationalists burnt," "Ukrainians butchered Poles," yet the emphasis was twice made on "we lived together." A short story of the inter-ethnic war is developed by the musings about Ukrainian land and foreign Poles. Nevertheless, if we compare narrations about Polish and Soviet rule, the latter is distinctly much worse due to the interlocutors,

> I. Can you please tell us, was there any animosity between Ukrainians and Poles towards the end of the war?
> R.: In villages around here, people say not really; they beat each other. Burnt…
> I.: Burnt?
> R.: Burnt, that I remember. But those were neither the Germans nor the others. The others, how do you call them nationalists or whatever? What could I have known back then? I remember one night I heard a loud noise; the other night, something caught on fire. I had a wife, and she has now passed away. There is a village called Rybnyky; it is Berezhany district, the station is there, maybe you've heard. So there, in Rybnyky, Ukrainians massacred Poles. They lived together, lived together (*stressed upon twice*). There are still many huts left, and many are gone. Time, time. Were, were. Why were? Here, they say, is not Polish land, but Ukrainian. But when they conquered during that Polish-Ukrainian war, that's when they. People used to say, "Give someone an inch, and they will take a mile." What did they expect? If they lived peacefully, so would be it. It was all

[82] Ibid.

[83] Interview with a man, DOB 1933, recorded in the town of Pidhaitsi, Ternopil oblast. Interviewer Anna Wylegała.

> Polish. The same happened under Soviet rule, even worse. Definitely, even worse. […][84]

Point-blank and unanimously negative were the answers of eyewitnesses to questions about their personal and family involvement in the plundering of the property of murdered Jews, "We did not have that. Even though my father was there (he worked for a local Jewish landowner), we did not have Jewish things. […] nothing like that. Father would not go there himself as he was very much afraid of those things. And people told him if he wanted. No. Other people went; they had the staff at their homes. I know they did. I won't be lying to you that we had something because I don't remember anything like that"[85]. These are not solitary cases.

Conclusions

Oral stories collected within the project "Social Anthropology of Filling the Void: Poland and Ukraine after World War II" are one of the few opportunities not missed to compile a corpus of sources about the history of the 1930ˢ–1940ˢ and Eastern Halychyna in particular. These are biographies of average Halychyna residents who often shared their life experiences for the first time, biographies that cannot be found in traditional archives. All the stories are about the same period and the same region – pre-war coexistence of Halychyna Ukrainians, Poles, and Jews, their everyday and social life, the changes brought about by the war, "social void." It is a common yet different experience – each respondent had their own story about pre-war childhood years and their own account of the war. The narration of the "big" story is made of a palette of "small" reactions to events, and it is the inner world of a person – their worries and experiences, successes, hopes, and expectations. Individual experiences are primarily formed under the influence of emotions, and they had a significant impact on convictions and memory. As a rule, but mistakenly, reflexive emotions (reactions to immediate physical and social surroundings that emerge and die down quickly, which are accompanied by mimics and bodily changes) be taken as a basis of all emotions, thus exaggerating the intensity, spontaneity and overlooking the qualities of emotions. Here I mean about fear, anger, happiness, disgust, shock. Relatively stable long-term emotions – reflexive and moral – are less tied to

[84] Interview with a woman, DOB 1937, recorded in the village of Utikhovychi, Peremyshliany district of Lviv oblast. Interviewer Marta Havryshko.

[85]

short-term assessments, are based on moral intuitions and principles, and often serve as background for moods and reflexive emotions (for more, see Jasper 2011, 287). Traumatic experiences have changed fates and have become so much engraved in the memory that during a conversation, they can be replayed with respective somatic responses allowing one to see oneself in this or that moment described. While individual interviews unearth the emotions of a specific narrator with regards to their past, a collection of a more extensive set of interpretations may reveal the emotions which are (not)shared in a particular community, point to a conflict between the norms accepted in the group and the individual emotional experience.

The people born in the 1920ˢ, particularly at the beginning of the decade, were offered complete stories. Emerging in their memories are communities of Halychyna villages and towns – Ukrainian, Polish, and Jewish, (non) coexistence and occupations, religious practices, the dynamics of aggravated relations between Ukrainians and Poles, Soviet repressions, German occupation, the creation of the ghettos, the Holocaust. Yet, the majority of respondents were born in the 1930ˢ. Their childhood memories were related to teachers and school, where local Polish children would often study alongside Ukrainians and Jews. Childhood memories were full of stories about the local landowner and their family, the allure of their manor, hired labor, themselves included. With rare exceptions, the village community meant exclusively "nice" coexistence between neighbors of different nationalities, children going to the Catholic cathedral for Catholic Christmas or to the synagogue out of curiosity, singing Polish carols, children helping Jews on Saturday, making fun of the Jewish kids. The testimony of pre-war life was more extended – repeat arrival of the Soviet rule, education and female teachers arriving from the Eastern regions, collectivization, everyday life, religious life in the underground, post-war arrests, and repressions. Interviews recorded with those born in the second half of the 1930ˢ also contain elements of "not personal" stories – that of relatives (father, brother) who made a heroic feat or suffered a lot during the complicated wartime. Due to the lack of individual memories, such narrators would more often share "secondary testimony" as translators of memory on landmark events experienced by their relatives that were shared by the relatives or discovered through communication within the local community. Gender-motivated experience also draws specific attention as most of the respondents were female, just like in any other project with elderly groups of people in Ukraine, due to a longer life span.

Testimony of childhood experiences – being orphaned, hard labor around the house as the oldest child, disability, the father being mobilized to the army, quitting school education, and, hence, being different from other children – were the most emotional parts of memories on pre-war and war everyday life. With

a rare exception, the loss of the nearest and dearest was articulated first – immediately at the beginning of the narration, but very briefly as if in passing. Childhood trauma impacted the rest of life and identity, especially when it comes to orphans. They did not tell of their personal life, but it becomes clear from the examples about others that the chances of getting married for love in a poor post-war village were slim.

Children had a powerful reaction to violence, anxiety, uncertainty in times of war, fear for their lives amid persecution of others, namely Jews. Solitary and fragmented memories of the Holocaust that are forever imprinted in the memory of children where they are either actualized ("what I saw, I still remember today," "I steered clear as I was afraid," "we were far off, we were afraid") or completely suppressed, served as the emotional climax of those infrequent biographical narratives which described them. In the interviews recorded, it is quite easy to spot numerous, mostly, non-verbalized signs of what the respondents cannot or do not want to tell about the traumatic experience: the question at the end of the interview "what else can I tell you?", when the Holocaust and the best childhood friend – a Jewish boy – have not yet been mentioned; a complete orphan stripped of parental love and the broken story on hostility inside the family of a Polish mother and a Ukrainian father, etc.

Yet, silence has objective reasons as well. Lack of trust and suspicion is a challenge for the oral historian (especially a foreigner) conducting field studies in a post-totalitarian state. Soviet people have for decades been taught to be careful in conversations and keep silent about private memories not fit for the official history. It isn't straightforward to motivate them to express thoughts and opinions freely and discuss their historical experience from many perspectives. It is almost impossible to make them take a critical look at specific topics like Ukrainian-Polish confrontation, ethnic discrimination, stereotypes. The local community will not give away "one of ours," just like foreigners (Poles or Jews) will not be told of the crimes "one of ours" committed against their nation. That is why silence and suppression/displacement of memories are popular responses to the traumatic past, leverages or destroys group values or individual reputation. In addition, "forgetting from above" overlaps with "forgetting from below" via unwillingness to revisit traumatic moments, the risk "to transfer" them to relatives and children. There is still fear of signing supporting documents for the interview with comments, "sign for me," "it even has text in English. On the other side, it is bilingual. […] And where is this Akademika Bohomoltsia Street?" etc. The experiences remain predominantly private and still very traumatic, not articulated, and, thus, not processed. Even though oral stories do not heal, they can help deal with "open wounds." Numerous researches have shown that people who have experienced trauma can improve their physical and mental state by

articulating or writing about their experiences. To sum up, when we express emotions (cry, shout) and continue speaking, it shows that what is being said is essential (Jones 1998, 55) and needs to be articulated.

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TRAUMA, EMOTIONS, AND SILENCE: ORAL HISTORY NARRATIVES ABOUT THE COMPLICATED PAST ON THE FRONTIERS (EASTERN HALYCHYNA, 1930ˢ–1940ˢ)

SUMMARY

The article analyzes oral stories of Eastern Halychyna residents about the complicated memory of the process and (not)filling of the "social void" – the war, vanished ethnic communities (the Holocaust, the deportation of Poles), ethnic discord, and Soviet repressions against the backdrop of the 1930ˢ–1940ˢ epoch in general and everyday stories, personal stories in particular. Specific attention is drawn to emotions in the oral stories about traumatic experiences of the complicated past. Based on Dorothy Atkinson's concept on the three levels of expressing emotions in oral historical narratives, the paper focuses on the plot of narration **(**narrations), stories on separation, suffering, and loss, as well as silence – what has not been told and has been kept to oneself. The stories of people born in the 1920ˢ have a particularly intricate plot; these are stories of young people who could(not) make a choice. Yet, a vast majority of the respondents were born in the 1930ˢ. Thus, their testimony describes not only personal childhood trauma – being orphaned, hard labor and disability lost opportunities of getting an education and social growth, unsuccessful personal life – but also contains eyewitness stories of the Holocaust, which serve as the emotional climax for those infrequent biographical narratives, which describe it. Childhood trauma has affected the rest of the life and identity, especially that of orphans. Specific topics have not been raised, which is a telling sign of trauma and ruptures, fragmentation of the narration, rapid switch to neutral topics.

Nevertheless, silence has an objective side – over the decades of the totalitarian regime, people have gotten used to being careful about what they say, especially if it involves a different private experience and complicated topics. Also, dominant for Ukrainian eyewitnesses is the pro-self-narrative, which is unwilling to portray "self" (in general and in the local community in particular) negatively. Research proven ability to recall the emotion in traumatic experiences, the study of relatively stable long-term emotions (reflecting and moral) and the memory formed under their influence, the creation of a therapeutic situation during an interview via careful listening and empathy, i.e., articulating things yet unheard – are part of the increased problematics of oral history which awaits further, more profound research.

Keywords: oral historical narratives, emotions, trauma, silence, Eastern Halychyna, the 1930ˢ–1940ˢ